



# Child Protection Planning Meetings

A Guide for Parent & Carers

**This information and advice leaflet is to help you and your family understand what you can expect before, during and after a Child Protection Planning Meeting takes place about your child.**

## **Why has a Child Protection Planning Meeting been arranged?**

Child Protection Planning Meetings are multi-agency meetings arranged when there is a high level of concern for an unborn baby, child or young person and professionals believe that the unborn baby, child or young person has experienced significant harm or may be at risk of significant harm.

## **What is the purpose of a Child Protection Planning Meeting?**

This is a supportive process, and all agencies are committed to working with you and your family to understand your circumstances, identify what support is needed, and help keep your child safe.

Child Protection Planning Meetings ensure that all agencies involved in an unborn baby, child or young person's life can share information with and about them and their family, so that it can be determined whether the unborn baby, child or young person is likely to continue to be at significant risk of harm and whether their name should be added to Fife's Child Protection Register

## **Where does the meeting take place?**

Child Protection Planning Meetings are usually held in person in an office and you will be told the details beforehand. Your child's Social Worker will let you know what the plans are for the day and the best way for you to attend

## **What information goes to the Child Protection Planning Meeting?**

Your child's Social Worker will share with you, explain and help you to understand the report they have written. Your child's Social Worker will have invited other professionals and agencies to attend, and

they will also prepare reports for the meeting. Some reports will be shared with you in advance of the meeting but not all. Police reports will not be shared in advance due to the sensitivity around some of the information. Also, some Health information may not be shared if it is sensitive or involves a live investigation. If you think any of the information in the reports is not accurate, please discuss this with your child's Social Worker or the Chairperson of the Child Protection Planning Meeting.

## **Getting ready for the Child Protection Planning Meeting**

Attending the Child Protection Planning Meeting may make you anxious, therefore we encourage you to bring someone with you for support, this can be a family member, a friend or an Advocate. The Chairperson of the Child Protection Planning Meeting will contact you prior to the meeting to hear your views and discuss with you what will happen on the day.

## **Who will be at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?**

At this multi-agency Child Protection Planning Meeting you should expect there to be:

- your child's Social Worker and/or their manager
- someone from NHS Fife, like a School Nurse, Midwife, Health Visitor or GP
- someone who knows your child from their school or nursery, like their Headteacher or Guidance Teacher.
- a Police Officer with a special knowledge of Child Protection
- voluntary agencies involved with your family
- a Note Taker who will produce a note of the meeting's main points
- Chairperson who runs the meeting and makes sure everyone has a chance to speak

If another service is involved in supporting you and your family, they may also attend the meeting

## **Children and Young People at Child Protection Planning Meetings**

We want to support you to attend the meeting in any way we can. If, for example, you need help with childcare arrangements, please speak to your child's Social Worker.

A child or young person can have a conversation with the Chairperson, before or during the meeting, to share their views about what is happening in their lives. They can also choose to attend all or part of the meeting.

### **What happens at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?**

The Chairperson will introduce everyone in the meeting and provide a summary of the reasons for the meeting.

Each person will be invited to share their views and provide information. You will always be asked if you agree with what has been said or if you have a different view, your views are very important, and the meeting needs to hear them.

After the discussion in the meeting the Chairperson will describe the strengths, vulnerabilities and risks for your child and/or family. They will then ask everyone in the meeting whether your child is at significant risk of harm and whether their name should be added to Fife's Child Protection Register. If there is disagreement, the Chairperson will use their professional judgement to decide whether or not your child's name should be placed on Fife's Child Protection Register.

### **How long does the meeting last? When will I receive the Minutes?**

A Child Protection Planning Meeting will generally last between 1 and 1.5 hours. The note of the meeting should be sent to you within 5 working days.

Please read the note of the meeting carefully and speak to your child's Social Worker if you have any questions about what was discussed and agreed in the meeting.

## **What decisions can be made at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?**

The Child Protection Planning Meeting will decide:

- Whether your unborn baby, child or young person's name should be added to Fife's Child Protection Register - this is a list of unborn babies, children and young people who need to have special plans in place to make sure they are kept safe and protected from harm.
- Whether to refer the child or young person to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing; this may happen where it is felt that legal measures are needed to protect a child or young person.

The Chairperson will create a Child Protection Plan which will be reviewed at regular Core Group Meetings.

## **What happens if my child's name is not added to the Child Protection Register?**

The meeting may decide that your child's name does not need to be added to Fife's Child Protection Register but may identify that you and your family still need some extra help and support.

## **My child's name was added to Fife's Child Protection Register – what happens now?**

The Child Protection Register is a highly confidential document and access to it is strictly controlled. Your child's name will be added to this Register with a brief note of the main concerns for them. When a child's name is added to the Child Protection Register, the Social Worker must:

- arrange visits to your home, usually weekly, on an announced and unannounced basis.
- arrange to see your child, subject to their age, on a one-to-one basis outside of the home.
- organise Core Group Meetings – the first within 15 working days of the Child Protection Planning Meeting taking place and then every 4 weeks thereafter.

## **What are Core Group Meetings?**

The Core Group is made up of you, your child if they want to attend, your child's Social Worker and other professionals involved with you and your family and usually those people named in your child's plan. At the first Core Group Meeting, the Child Protection Plan put in place at the Child Protection Planning Meeting will be developed into the Child's Plan.

This plan will clearly set out how risks for your child are to be reduced. You will have tasks to complete, as will the workers involved. All the professionals working with your family have a duty to work closely with each other and to share information in the best interests of your child. Core Group Meetings are an important way of doing this, but information will also be shared between professionals out with Core Group Meetings.

## **How long will my child's name be added to the Child Protection Register for?**

Your child's name will be added to the Register for a minimum period of 6 months. A Review Child Protection Planning Meeting will then take place. If your child's name is kept on the Register at this time, it will be for a further period of 6 months before that decision is formally reviewed again, unless an early Review is agreed at a Core Group Meeting.

## What if I don't agree with the decision of the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

If you don't agree with the decision made about adding the name of your child to Fife's Child Protection Register, there is a process to review the decision. Please talk to the Reviewing Officer who will refer the decision for review as soon as possible. The expected timescale for a review of the decision would be no more than 3 to 5 working days, except in exceptional circumstances. A review meeting may be held. The original registration decision will stand until any updated decision is made.

It is advisable to discuss the decision with your child's allocated Social Worker who can provide you with information about how the decision was reached. You will also receive a copy of the note of the meeting, this will give you further information.

Should you believe that any agency presented incorrect information that influenced the decision to register your child's name the allocated Social Worker can provide you with information about the Complaints Procedure for the relevant agency.





For more information about  
child protection in Fife visit

[www.fifechildprotection.org.uk](http://www.fifechildprotection.org.uk)



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